

SLU Neighborhood Plan Update Workshop Notes

April 4, 2006

Table 1

What Makes SLU More Livable?

- Green Streets
- Grocery
- SLU Park
- More Retail (Local Stores).
- Public Transportation.
- Public Schools,
- Serve Street People.
- Protect Arts Facilities.
- Playgrounds/Play Structures.
- Preservation of old Buildings (Trad. Fabr.).
- Pocket Parks (Improve Denny Park/Cascade Park) Patchwork.
- Encourage Private Development to have open space.
- Feeling safe when walking through.
- Community Center – Activities for young people.
- Pedestrian friendly throughout neighborhood.

HOUSING:

- Market rate housing missing from list.
- Need for balanced development (structure/form).
- Mixed income blocks.
- More ownership housing.
- Housing stock match jobs (housing/job balance).
- Workforce housing.
- Integration of housing & jobs (proximity of housing to work).
- Bike paths (connections)/encourage bikes.
- Start the Lake Union Bike Trail connect with Potlatch Trail.
- Water Taxi connection neighborhoods.
- Encourage active alternative transportation.
- P-Patches/community gardens.
- Farmers Market.
- Community gathering places.
- Family housing.
- Stores.
- Healthcare.
- Courtyards/pocket park/platforms.
- Relationship with housing.
- Landscaping (traffic calming/sound buffer).
- Small sq. ft. stores.

- Lots of small retail.
- Mixed use.
- Retail live-work spaces (store-front w/living loft).

Industrial/Commercial

- Expand types of uses of area.
- Special zone that would encourage live-work.
- Cultural co-op spaces clustered together.
- Model Neighborhood for integ. of industrial/cultural/arts/ed. spaces.
- Preserve existing (industrial) uses or accept new uses? (Due to prices)
- TDR to preserve industrial land.
- Incubator for small scale industrial.
- Maintain green space & view corridor.
- Low buildings make Seattle unique & homey.
- Stair-stepping up.
- Should IC-65 area be changed?
 - New industrial zone
 - Mixed use
 - Yes
 - Alternative industrial zone
 - But current industrial building keep new corridor.
 - Keep industrial as predominant use.
 - Like meat-packing district, NYC.
- Only way to turn Terry Ave. into pedestrian-friendly street is to have residents use & mix retail/commercial.

- Move zone boundaries (see map) special industrial district.

What about North/South Denny height difference?

- View corridor by varying building height points of highs & lows mixed. Planning tools to achieve that.
 - Use far.
- Setbacks can help prevent blocking view of Space Needle.
- Trees, lots of trees!!!
- Use TDR model from downtown.
- Reduce parking requirements (outdated for SLU). Let market decide.
- Add cross-town connections.
- SLU not too well served by public transportation.
- Add transportation hub in SLU.
- Mercer mess (trapped by I-5, 99, Denny).
- Perception of safety on streets & public transportation.
- Become art center with existing galleries. Artist line work space.
- Pedestrian only streets (part-time).
- Hidden (facing alleys) vertical parking structures for retail.
- Connection to Seattle Center.
- Pedestrian bridges.

Table 2

Housing/Community/Facilities

- Hardest thing/very important – Middle/moderate income housing. Affordable to average wage earner. Needs to be added to list.
- Family housing – Is this realistic in the Center City? Tail wagging the dog problem – without basic services, makes it difficult for people to move here (grocery, schools, both institutional & community retail facilities).
- Housing (within buildings) that is mixed income.

Roles/Industrial Commercial Area

- Influence of rising land prices make warehousing less efficient to retain U.S. housing/office.
- There is a great deal of IC zoned land-Port, Interbay- So there isn't limited supply of IC. But SLU is close to downtown, should be developed in more flexible zoning – like NC zoning.
- Height above 85' raises construction costs.
- Would like to see housing included in that IC area.
- Seems that most of the existing character is commercial (light industry) not industrial as defined by LUC. Uses would be allowed under NC or SM.

Tools

- Height:
 - Didn't feel like there would be much neighborhood opposition.
 - Denny as an artificial boundary.
 - Volunteer Park/Axial view, Terry, Westlake, Fairview are important. Threat to these view corridors at the end, take union/valley of these streets.
 - Taking advantage of SLU being as a "bowl" shape.

- Being smart about building parking as it affects height (low water table can't build too deep). Taking advantage of transit street car, flexcar.
- Infrastructure Development:
 - Developer funded vs. City funded.
 - Utilities/SDOT need coherent plan.
 - Underground utilities, paid for collectively.
- Street/sidewalk infrastructure needs to be addressed collectively – not just blocks where new buildings built.
- How can the new tax base be tapped?
- Environmental remediation issues can become a black hole – is there a way the process at the City/State can be reduced?

What about TDR?

- Are there enough properties that would qualify? Are there other incentive programs that would work better? Like the downtown Bonus Program.
- Would be a good way to create different, varied height limits of buildings.
- Is there a place for both a bonus program & TDR (historical protection) (functional services).
- Would like to see "Green Street" design guidelines – Terry Avenue, etc... to help grow the infrastructure, give guidance. Expand Terry Avenue Guidelines.
- Is there a transport/street plan to guide street/ROW widths parking allowed? Yes!
- Drainage – green, sustainable, tree pits, semi-porous surfaces rooftop drainage. Other affordable ways to carry storm water runoff.

- “Require” silver LEED is the wrong term. Encourage, etc... would be better term.
- Education very important.

Heights

- Transit-oriented development.
- Incentives between 50 – 85 & 85↑.
- View corridors.
- Set-backs.
- Downtown model.
- Importance of lights & air on street-level.
- Height – SC line. Mercer, Denny, Westlake perimeter of neighborhood.
- What’s left What are opportunities?
- 3c. enhance diverse character.
- 5b. need to do this sooner rather than later (or will be too late).
- Identify character building in plan.
- Design Review Board for SLU. Maybe North Downtown Board, including Denny triangle, Belltown SLU.

Table 3

Introductions

Live in SLU = 0 (Yes), 10 (No)

Work in SLU = 7 (Yes), 3 (No)

1 former resident.

Housing & Facilities

List – what do you think? (missing) – reasonable

- Shopping – walk distance.
- Mid-range housing important (low density housing, SF cost prohibitive).
- Is work force housing included in “mixed-income housing”? (example: Rainier Vista – realistic mixed housing).
- Live-work artist spaces – historic buildings.

Need?

- Mid income gets left out (not subsidized).
- Height increase, density is a solution.

Want

- 25% of building for middle income downtown workforce.
- Not segregate to buildings – low-mid spread out. Remember, research facilities bring in mid-range workforce – tie to employment: all segments.
- Minimize SOV use.
- School, teachers, police, admin (FH) – incentives to keep employees in neighborhood.
- Are there mechanisms for private institutions to support transportation management/housing plans?

- Middle income purchasing homes – getting out of rental; condos are volatile with market triangle. Mid-income wants neighborhood experience.

Locations

- Near a park.
- Where are the focus/nodes? – Along street car line – goes through comm. 1 – should it be rezoned?
- Maintaining Industrial character – transform/incorporate arts & culture? Perhaps, with incentives.
- Intentional integration of culture – bearing organizations with neighborhood.
- Housing along transit to get downtown to work. Can this (street car line) be a model for TOD? Aggressive match of housing, retail, density (important along major thoroughfares to ease congestion).
- Target more housing where it's already happening.
- Want housing along transit corridor and can warehouse/artist character be preserved – ex as an incentive to gain an alley ROW.
- Preserve character of "track district" along Terry. Maybe a 3 – 4 block long sub district (outline in --- brown).
- Maritime industry is no longer really here – can preserve character.
- Can you really keep the industrial uses that are currently there (actual current industrial over near Dexter), but can preserve Industrial builders stock. Maybe a historic district? Harder when buildings are spread out. One option – nominate bids to landmark status one-by-one (developer).

Preservation by selling air rights TDR?

- (view corridors – Space Needle – SEPA viewpoints) More height is good with limits (not block sunlight – 65 too short).

- Vancouver Pin tower structures – trade off with setbacks.
- People do want to live here. East of Fairview feels disconnected from west of Fairview – harder to get resident opinion. This has a neighborhood feel, west of Fairview doesn't have that neighborhood feeling.
- Balance height with more/small green space/open space.
- Plaza – level green space.
- Green roof buildings.
- Mid-block views/pathways, bike-walk trails. Dedicate courtyards to this.
- Additional incentives for height.
- "Mid-block pedestrian open-space".
- Thomas & Harris – designated green sheets, upper floor setback (current).
- Preserve historic buildings for cultural purpose, tax credits, and financial feasibility of preservation.
- Will have to try harder to get east & west connections (for general connectivity).
- Hard now to cross Fairview. Slow down? Easier to cross?
- Make Denny & Stewart I-5 access easier to divert from Mercer/Fairview.
- Fairview, Westlake, & Dexter Boulevards are slow to lease community space east of Fairview. Parking is a huge issue in this underground.
- Higher buildings, closer to the City – sloped down towards the lake and along transit corridor.
- Sensitive to pedestrian (Pin Tower). Mountain waterfront access pressure view corridors, ex, Vancouver, pressures open feeling not

east of Fairview.

- Makes sense with the lower topography increase height restriction within areas (lanes?) along transit. Bring people into this “valley” – parks (not just shopping).
- Mercer will still be a mess, cut through development down to lake. Current SDOT plan to make Boulevard & Valley become a NH connector.
- Greater E/W access on Thomas & Harrison. Bike paths are not safe (corridors) - need safer trails.
- Incentives aimed at developers to build 80's, 60's, & moderate income – higher development.

What defines mixed incomes within one building?

- Money goes to fund or within development.
- Multi-family tax exemption to provide at 60% med. Income.
- Provide as many options/flexibility.
- Open space, mid-block path as incentive for ↑ height. Good for retail/niche stores. Currently optional – doesn't happen so incentives help!
- Development incentives to provide for arts. Already 1% for the arts. This is good, could be more not tied to private level?

Pedestrian connections to Capital Hill?

Under freeway? Transient population.

- Transient/Homeless services:
 - Ex. – near schools questionable, near churches, meals, services.
 - There must be homeless services in this neighborhood. Is part of current neighborhood character.
- Urban reststop/CP1 facilities receive a lot of pushback/controversy. Acceptance as incentive for height.

- Historical buildings – educational facilities – connect kids to pre-existing culture.
- Only 1 3-bd. Development. Sometimes goes to college renters. People don't currently associate "family" with SLU.
- SLU can't provide every need – small part of City – is this may be the neighborhood for a downtown school?
- Match human service provider with school El Centro De la Raza (example) – sanctioned K-5 public school. Community Center – Arts usage (compatible with ↑ height.

Priority Amenities as Incentives

- Green
- Social Services
- Housing
- Mid-class – working-class
- Open space – mid block mews

Balancing all these.

Table 4

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|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Office• Biotech• Schools – CC Promoting Sustainability• Library• Community Center• Mid Income Housing• Pedestrian Scale• Street Diversity – Neighborly Character• Rehab Old Buildings/Historic Preservation/Adap• Prioritize Schools & Services• Student Housing | <u>Housing Types</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• High-rise• Sustainable• Townhouse/Towers<ul style="list-style-type: none">- like Vancouver• Smaller Footprint Towers<ul style="list-style-type: none">to maintain views |
|--|---|

Missing from List

- Affordable groceries *Diversity
- Retail
- Pet Stores
- Family Restaurants
- Full Service Neighborhood
- Post Office
- Off-Street Parking

Priorities

- | | |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Public School – Downtown – plan for it• Other cities with sustainability index?• Long-term sustainability as a neighborhood goal• Pedestrian & public transit access• Mixed income – Artist live-work• Diversity• Building that fosters community• Incentives for green companies | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Social services• Historic Preservation• Green Street guidelines• Density• Way-finding signage• Safety for homeless |
|--|---|

Where should housing go?

- Around lake
- Near Cascade Playground & Denny Park
especially families & mixed income
- Along Westlake, Trolley line
- Along Fairview
- Between Denny Park & UW
- Townhouses in area between I-5 & IC Zone

Change zoning of IC Zone?

- SM zone provides flexibility
- Street car corridor needs residential support
- Higher housing density around street car – transit-based development
- Preserve/restore more interesting looking historic buildings – key buildings
- Change edges to mixed use (SM)
- Not much remaining true industry
- Retain historic buildings

Uses in existing IC Zone?

- SM theater
- Lofts
- School

Height – Incentives

- Incentive to preserve arts!!!
- Incentives for sustainability
- Increase height along I-5, near Lake Union (tall & thin to protect views)
 Along 8th Ave., near Denny Park
- Maintain view corridors
 - Space Needle
 - Sunset
 - Lake Union

Techniques

- Non-profit property developer (i.e., SEED, DNDA)
- Penalty for under-utilized & abandoned buildings
- LID's
- Partner early with other Government entities
- Marketing
- Education to help organizations get tax credits

Table 5

Housing & Community Facilities

- Costly homes built.
- Want all types, income levels (all) Broaden and services, facilities.
- Income level/housing types – should be all levels.
- Special needs for these pops; complex needs & support.
- Buildings as types – that create comm.; clustering, transitiona, etc. function & flow rather than just structures.
- What shape? Market will be a driver; incentives also needed for variety of housing types; TDR's, etc.

Where would these/this be likely?

- Street car will be factor, benefit – get people out of cars. Transportation links critical.

Return on investments – short-term formula?? Money creativity, objectivity property owners & incentives – mix

- Change coincident with benefits – outcomes more long-range.

Framework? How to shape these policies/goals?

Specific locations for emphasizing mixes?

- Diversity, ↑ levels (income, etc.).
- More density in certain areas...
- Dexter Avenue?
- Denny?

Is the housing list inclusive? (Housing types)

Landscape changes (housing) – how to integrate groups/changes. How to address these issues?

- Think of this in terms of housing, people, communities (rather than in addition to buildings).
- Fear that developers/development won't address diversity plan.
- Community ultimately divides.

What is missing on the list?

- Stay on target with focus.
- Always assumption ↑ in heights/densities.
- Need more focus on parks, services, & schools.
- Grocery store
- No, list not complete – framing, groupings – not complete.
- Diversity means schools, restaurants, “conditions desired”.
- Restaurants, schools, parks, streetscapes, infrastructure (drainage, etc.), linkages.
- Neighborhood fragmented, 0 transitions – needs work.
- Pedestrian blockages.

Role of Industrial Community areas

Directing these changes – progress

How to manage with the existing zones?

- Mixed zone is local (implicit in SLU).

Are the proposed changes appropriate? Land use zone, no housing??

- Incidences of vacant land being gobbled up with mixed use... condos not affordable. What's in community, diversity? i.e., Belltown – how to prevent this?
- Values – intimacy, identity – SLU 0. Focus on this through zoning.
- Also enable desirable neighborhood character.
- Arts/culture also represent SLU values.
- Discussion of zoning, IC (anything non-residential), SM.
- IC – continue with this? Or, allow housing in there? IC seen as incubating opportunity – Impact on arts community? Allow some unique uses.

Whether to rezone? How to continue to encourage desired uses? What can be added?

- IC as independent zone.
- History of IC Zone...
- Mixes... Maintain access rent structure, plus development atop (vertical).
- IC – hub of IC or mixture of uses? Clustering?

Can you mix the IC Zone? Reduce the size? How to best leverage space to incubate certain uses? Retain space for IC or middle ground?

- Reduce the size? Yes (conditionally).
- Value is still diversity.
- Outcome potential should maintain diversity.

- Development/density coming – we need to ensure that workers in SLU can also live there.

Are there resources in IC that are not available in SM?

- Not at present,; with development, perhaps yes, with exchange.

What would developer's need/want? What incentives, levers exist?

- Outcomes for developers: height.
- Zoning standards: Housing exists.
- (Fairview) breaks up the area – divider, in bowl.
- Single developer has ↑ input decisions.

Public/private domain market . Value of public goods/amenities. Are these worth exploring in this issue?

- Partnerships (public/private) important.
- Public resources within IC? Outcomes should lead to opportunities.
- IC could continue as sustainability district and mixed use; live/work?

What is/are the character(s) of the whole area? (to give shape to issue/question.) What do we want to retain?

- Whole district includes arts; historical, legacy arts; Art District – need to incubate an Arts District – height “artsy feel” – throughout district.
- Are the arts currently threatened? Yes. Clustering of arts community might also makes sense – gets to sustain issue.

- Areas need to be sustainable. What makes a sustainable community?
 - Incentives, investments... for building community.

How would a “heart of the arts” center impact the rest of the City?

- Continues to incubate arts and enterprise.
- Prime real estate (IC area) – We need to also ask “what does the neighborhood need?” Maintain current level of services, diversity, avoid homogeneity.
- Need strong zoning that restricts land values or incentives for developers, rent control.
- Understanding how increases in land values impacts the neighborhood.

Table 6

Housing & Community Facilities

- Affordable housing (in addition to low-income).
- Mixed income – include market rate housing or higher end.
- Multifamily mixed income.
- How do we want to effect demographics targets? Subsidies? Incentives?
- Pear District does not reflect diversity in housing – families, incomes, etc.
- It will be difficult to build to middle income housing without intervention because of construction costs.
- Density ↑ will require taller/denser buildings. Must consider costs, construction type, tall/short housing products. Zoning/building code (problem).
- TDR's will allow for more flexibility & variation in height.
- Traditional planner view – stepping back from natural features.
- Vancouver model – take density to the edge. Allow for/have vehicle for Pin Towers (small slender) – Build more value into up-zone.
- Density – leverage street care. Street car is SLU's connection to downtown.
- Mixed use and housing along street car. Mixed use will make avenue more dynamic.
- Community facility – great opportunity for Urban school.
- Key to bringing families is school.
- Family housing – middle to upper end – there is not a lot of demand yet.

- Neighborhood amenities are important part of package for creating demand for family.
- Seattle is trending away from families with kids living here. What is the critical mass?
- Safety & parks are key to families & others.
- Low income housing (20-30 person capacity), paired with human services, benefit of pocket parks (mid blocks) – development incentive.
- Define character when deciding what is historic.
- Balance of preservation & new development.
- Scale – diversity of building types & styles can/should help make neighborhood more interesting.
- Urban character/aesthetic will be enhanced by diversity of scale, historic preservation, etc.
- Residential 'enclaves' are important away from bars, late night noise, etc. Areas that are not 24/7.
- How do you guide policy to create residential enclave? And successful retail?
- Where retail is focused – spine of street car?
- Street types can help program activity.

Industrial/Commercial

- Harrison could be a key E/W connection industrial zone may not help that connection.
- Pedestrian-oriented streetscape/street designation could be helpful.
- Industrial designation may no longer make sense, what uses do we lose?

- Consensus to up-zone to commercial or even mixed use?

Tools

- Global resp. to make this area denser.
 - With thought.
 - Focused transportation, where are primary pedestrian streets/retail streets planning for open space.
 - More development will allow for more mixed income housing & more amenities.
 - FAR – mixes of building types.
 - Planning/zoning that allows variation.
 - Height – take advantage of topography. Up-zones should take into account grading.
- 85 foot heights does not produce housing – higher zoning is needed.
- FAR/housing bonus tools to get to 160.
- TDR/Setbacks for retail developers (bonus).
- Fire code/building code & market forces will require higher heights where you want high-rise housing (opposed to commercial).
- Focus nodes of activity.
- IC Zone may still be business-oriented.
- “Point towers” give a pedestrian a feeling of lower heights & visual relief.
- Zoning to sculpt visual form.
- Tax abatement of amenities or to focus development desires.
- Tie density & development to Denny Triangle.
- Opportunities to improve public realm & streetscape. i.e. larger sidewalks.

- Portland retail – Pearl is not the goal, 23rd street is – but can you plan this??
 - 23rd – We don't have the same bones or physical structure.
- Retail component is important. How do we 'plan' or 'program' it? Where retail? Terry, Harrison. Retail is 5 years behind residential.
- SLU Design Review Board **